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Indonesia: General Suharto continues to set the stage for congressional debate on Sukarno's future.

Congress, Indonesia's highest policy-making body which includes the 350-member Parliament, convenes in special session from 7 to 11 March. In a speech to Parliament on 4 March, Suharto explained the transfer of power from the president to himself. He warned the Congress not to take action that would provoke new conflict and tensions, particularly among the armed forces.

General Suharto seems to have deliberately obscured his precise position as to what action he wants Congress to take. His opposition to a court trial for Sukarno, however, appears fairly firm. The question remains open as to whether Sukarno will be suspended--with or without his presidential title--or actually dismissed. An army spokesman announced on 3 March that the government is considering where in Indonesia Sukarno should live since he has decided he does not want to take a "rest" abroad.

Suharto controls a majority of the votes in Congress but that he has a strong distaste for an open vote and will probably work for a "consensus." His task involves not only the accommodation of pro- and anti-Sukarno groups but also adjustments between military and civilian elements.

A significant aspect of the present controversy is the deepening distrust and growing rivalry between the military commanders and civilian political elements. These now center less on Sukarno's future status and more on the respective roles of each group in the post-Sukarno period. The contest could cause lasting internal divisions, and it thus constitutes a crucial test of Suharto's political talents.

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Venezuela: Communist terrorists have again demonstrated their ability to stage an occasional spectacular act of violence. The kidnaping and murder of the brother of Venezuela's foreign minister caused the government to suspend constitutional guarantees on Saturday, only two days after they had been restored. Although the terrorists have the capability to carry out isolated acts of this nature, government operations since mid-December probably have disrupted the terrorists' ability to mount a major campaign at this time.

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